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SUBJECT: SINAI RESIDENTS ANGRY OVER POTENTIAL GOE PLANS TO
REMOVE BUILDINGS AT BORDER

REF: CAIRO 2455

Sensitive but unclassified. Not for internet distribution.

(SBU) According to a press report, Rafah city residents remain angry over the possibility that the GOE will remove buildings within 150 meters of the Gaza border in order to enhance security. A member of the North Sinai Tagammu party, Ashraf el Hefny, told a reporter from Egypt's "Daily News" that the GOE is prohibiting new building permits within 150 meters of the border and refusing to grant water or electricity permits for buildings within 300 meters of the border. A GOE contact denied the claims about the permits and reiterated that internal GOE discussions on this issue are in the early stages, and that Egypt expects considerable opposition from the locals (see reftel) and is taking residents' concerns into consideration.
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